IT'S ALL CONNECTED
ISSUE 294 JANUARY 2016
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common ground

FREE MAGAZINE

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Antoine de Saint-Exupéry - The Little Prince

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**Reference: Anti-Influenza virus activities of commercial oregano oils and their carriers. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(07) 214-18.*

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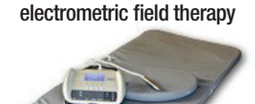

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■ **For 40 years** I had injections and drugs and finally Bell Shark Cartilage #1 spared me the endless torture I suffered day and night with 3 bottles costing less than $100. Pat Laughlin, Coldwater, ON ■ **Cancelled knee replacement.** 1 was in pain and limping. Have no more pain now. Can square dance for hours. Anton Melnychuk, Porcupine Plain, SK ■ **At first I was skeptical.** I gradually noticed an improvement. Then I took another brand. I was surprised having so much pain again. Eventually I realized that I needed to re-order Bell. Found relief again. Marie Ciraulo, 72, Oakland, CA. ■ **Many people on our website write:** "Can walk again for hours";"Can climb stairs without hanging on to railing";"First time in 15 years can sleep at night" **Also guaranteed for sciatica.** Hundreds of testimonials all with full names and towns. Shark bones/cartilage was a previously thrown away by-product of the food industry. No sharks are caught for their cartilage. Don't let any activist confuse you.

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#26 NPN 80053068

High blood pressure is called the silent killer. If your BP is higher than normal, try to get it down to about 120/80. For many people it is easy to control. On our website you will find over 50 testimonials with full names and towns from all over USA and Canada. Most of them have listed phone numbers and are happy to talk about the relief they had. No money was paid for testimonials. **Dr. C. Hammoud M.H., Ph.D.** recommends this effective fish peptide blood pressure natural product. **Truthful actual experiences from real people:** ■ **I was on 3 blood pressure drugs** that did not work well. After starting Bell #26 my readings are generally well below 120/80. *Dona A. Anderson, 76, Sooke, BC.*

■ **My blood pressure was 157/90** and I had side effects from prescription drugs. I bought a monitor. After 6 months on Bell #26 I was down to 120/80. *Toni L. McCuistion, 52, Elizabethtown, PA.*

■ **Blood pressure went from 170/110 down to 110/70.** Was on three medications that didn't help. Within a month on Bell#26 my BP dropped to 110/70. I thought I didn't need it anymore and the BP went up to 170/110 again. I will now stay on Bell. I am surprised about its effectiveness without side effects. Bell exceeds my expectations. Patrick McManus, 52, Edmonton, AB ■ **At work my driver's medical** test was too high at 170/100. After taking Bell #26 for a few days I went down to 128/84 which allowed me to pass my work medical. *Kris Geier, 48, Windsor, ON.*

Frequent BATHROOM TRIPS? Men Bell Prostate Ezee Flow Tea

#4a NPN 80051642

Men have relief in 3-5 days from dribbling, burning and rushing to the toilet. Relaxes blood flow for better erections. **Helps also with male incontinence.** Works in virtually every case. If you are considering surgery, try this tea first. Hundreds of delighted men testifying on our web site: ■ **Had to get up every hour** at night. Now I get up once a night. *Joseph Whittaker, Sewell, NJ* ■ **I cancelled my prostate surgery.** Get up once a night. I'm so happy not to have to face the torment of a prostate operation and possible incontinence and impotence. *Albert E. Blain, 74, Schumacher, ON* ■ **Even after TURP prostate surgery** and microwave therapy had to get up many times. Now down to 1-2 times. Tea is 100% better than drugs. *Robert G. Stocker, Eustasis, FL* ■ **After 1st year drinking tea** my PSA went down to 4.5; after 2nd year to 2.9; after 3rd year to 2.3. I highly recommend the tea. A real life saver. *Thomas M. Thurston, Forsyth, GA.*

Women Ask for #4b Bladder Control Tea for Women. **It seems so unbelievable**, many women don't know there is a delicious tasting herbal tea available in all health food stores that stops incontinence, bladder infections, UTis within days and women keep on wearing costly pads and diapers. Try the tea. It is guaranteed. Go shopping and travelling again worry free. We have helped tens of thousands of women.

Stop Heartburn & Reflux Naturally

#39 NPN 80053642

Prevent reflux by having an alkaline balanced stomach with the Bell Acidic Stomach & Alkaline Balance #39. You may not need more antacids or drugs ever after. Many millions suffer needlessly. Read the guarantee. **Alkaline balanced cells and body** gives us more comfort, better digestion and strengthens our immune system to fight illnesses.

Actual experiences from real people:

■ **Reflux gave me a sore throat and I could not sing in the church choir anymore.** After taking Bell #39 I have no more reflux and rejoice in singing again. *Helene Giroux, 65, Quebec, QC.*

■ **Have family history of heartburn.** For last 10 years I suffered a lot with acid reflux. I told all family members about #39 being all natural, giving quick relief with no side effects and no antacids needed anymore. *Michael Fasheh, 49, Port Ranch, CA.*

■ **Heartburn, acid reflux, stomach trouble for many years.** Doctors gave me different pills, but I had no lasting relief. Had every test known to man. I finally talked to my health food store and they said Bell Acidic Stomach/Alkaline Balance really works. It sure does. I had my husband and son take it and they all had the same results. I can now eat even spicy food with no problems. *Verna Conti, 80, London, ON.*

Snoring? Sleep apnea? Trouble falling asleep?

#23 NPN 80045172

University of Toronto professor states that 69% of adults have sleeping problems. Bad sleep reduces physical and creative energy all next day. Almost all families are affected. Sleep apnea may cause high blood pressure, strokes, heart attacks and irregular heart beats. Can be very destructive in relationships. **Hundreds of true testimonials on the Bell website from people like you.**

■ **I really didn't snore** or gasp for air anymore. I sleep through the night and feel rested and refreshed in the morning. *Mark Wilson, 40, Hudson, NH* ■ **Sleep apnea capsules worked first night.** For 15 years I had sleep apnea and my doctor made me buy a CPAP machine, which I could not use. Finally Bell #23 helped the first night and every night thereafter. Like a miracle. Unbelievable. *Karen Braun, 67, Glace Bay, NS* ■ **For 20 years I was waking up frequently** gasping for air. During the day I would start napping every time I would sit down, because I was tired. Since taking #23 sleeping 6 hours is heaven. It made a substantial change in my life. *Mary C. Myrick, 62, Jackson, MS* ■ **It is such a joy** not having to use the CPAP machine anymore. *Wayne Burse, 63, Beamsville, ON.*

69% of all adults don't sleep well
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Billions of dollars are wasted every day
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#51 NPN 80043470

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Happiness for couples is a satisfying sex life.

#6 NPN 80051008

Eroxil™ #6 helps most men to perform like in their 20's. Evidence of a few hundred testimonials on our web site with full names and towns. All 100% true: ■ **Eroxil is the best** of all the supplements for men I've tried. Boosts my sex drive and I'm able to function anytime. *Angus Gutke, 45, Calgary, AB.* ■ **Regained virility in 3 days.** My libido was restored for good sex. I've given it also to friends with the same results. One of them is a diabetic and overweight. *Dr. Louis Rolland, 72, St. Hyacinthe, QC.* ■ **Wonderful to feel like a man again.** It's wonderful to feel close to my wife again. God bless you! *Charles E. Palen, 77, Burnaby, BC.*

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PSORIASIS ■ **I had severe psoriasis** over 95% of my body. Last 5 years I have stunned every doctor and dermatologist. I spent tons of money on remedies. After I got Bell Help for Skin Disorders, I've never seen anything work as fast in my life. Within 2 days I saw my skin clearing up. I'm speechless. It was inexpensive compared with what I spent before. *Jessica Shantz, 25, Dawson Creek, BC.*

ECZEMA For 6 years my family doctor and dermatologist tried many medications and creams. After taking Bell Help for Skin Disorders for just a few days my eczema itching stopped and my face started to clear up. After suffering so long I am amazed with the results. *Andy Yuen, 58, Vancouver, BC.*

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151208-Common Ground

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Publications Mail Agreement No. 40011171
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to
Circulation Dept., Head office
ISSN No. 0824-0698

Head Office
Common Ground Publishing Corp.
3152 West 8th Ave.
Vancouver, BC V6K 2C3

Copies printed: 70,000
Over 250,000 readers per issue
Survey shows 3 to 4 readers/copy
plus online at www.commonground.ca

100% owned and operated by Canadians.
Published 12 times a year in Canada.

Annual subscription is $75 (US$75) for one year (12 issues). Single issues are $6 (specify issue #). Payable by cheque, Visa, MasterCard, Interac or money order.

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Cover image © inarik

Birthing a New Vision for Vancouver

We voted federally for better governance of our dear Canada. Now imagine a city that works for everyone, not just billionaires and developers. What is an economy for anyway? To make the rich 1 percent richer, or to develop an affordable, livable and beautiful city for all, which includes the first nations that lived here before Europeans arrived? The economy is here to make civilization better rather than enslave the middle class and ignore the pains of less fortunate.

We have to keep our word, and be honorable in the way we treat each other and the original inhabitants of this land. This edition is dedicated to that vision. And through respect and gratitude we can all be better people. We can make our world a safer, more artist, enjoyable and peaceful place. You may say I am a dreamer, but I am not the only one, we form 99% of the population. Let's make it work for all of us.

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ethics in action awards

Imagine a "Reconciliation Bridge" in Vancouver

A vision for a repurposed Georgia Viaduct

by Common Ground's publisher, Joseph Roberts

Walk for Reconciliation, Vancouver's ex-Georgia Viaduct, 2013 (above) and New York's new High Line Park ex-railway viaduct (below, left).

New York City had a brilliant idea. They took a viaduct and repurposed it into what has become a hugely popular aerial greenway park. Two years ago, while visiting NYC, I was one of first five million who had the delightful experience of strolling across this amazing, recently opened public park in the sky.

It was true highlight of my trip … and it got me thinking. We could create our own uniquely creative version of New York's High Line Park by repurposing our very own Georgia Viaduct. And we could name this new park the "Reconciliation Bridge," in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation. A triple bottom line: good for reconciliation, good for the economy and good for the environment.

Imagine the unobstructed view of walking a couple of stories above street level through a well appointed parkway of indigenous grasses, flowers, plants and even trees! Their High Line Park provided ample benches and places to picnic, listen to music buskers, view local craft vendors, enjoy coffee, tea, and food offerings, read a book or do yoga. It was all there. And we can have it all here too if we catch the spirit of the Reconciliation Bridge and repurpose our sturdy Georgia Viaduct for the greater public good.

photo © Kobby Dagan

We already have the infrastructure. Rather than spend millions to simply destroy it wasting the resources and energy that went into planning and building it – re-using offers a vastly superior alternative. It would also provide a stunning walkway to the proposed new Art Gallery a block away. Let's save the Viaduct and transform it into a wondrous, aerial green parkway. Let's demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation and create a legacy that will serve the next "seven generations." Concrete can last a very long time, especially a structure built to support heavy trucks and cars. As a park, it will carry a much lighter load of pedestrian traffic and could easily last another 100 years. The Georgia Viaduct is an existing municipal asset that we can readily repurpose for recreational, garden, and cultural healing.

Vancouver's Reconciliation Bridge would be world-class – a superb use of urban architecture, offering a huge open space for arts and culture to flourish as well as constituting a gateway to some of the most important cultural buildings in our city: The Queen Elizabeth Theatre, CBC, GM Place and BC Place. As a walkway connecting historic Chinatown and the Eastside with the downtown core, visitors and tourists will have a birds-eye view of historic Gastown to the north, Old Chinatown to the NE, Main Street to the east, Science World to the SE, beautiful False Creek to the south – with its shoreline parks – the Cambie and Granville Street bridges to the SW and a distinctly urban view straight east on Georgia Street leading to the proposed new Art Gallery at Cambie and Georgia, all with a subway station near by.

The creation of a Reconciliation Bridge is an incredible opportunity for Vancouver to do the right thing. We can transform the Georgia Viaduct into one of the jewels of the city and a world-class tourist destination. This would be one the best use of an existing city asset since the inception of Stanley Park. And as well as honouring our First Nations, it would also serve as a concrete act of healing past transgressions and reconciling Canada's responsibility as well, ultimately leading us to an honourable, reconciled, culturally rich future.

For further information contact Common Ground joseph@commonground.ca There is a public meeting being planned with all parties invited to discuss how to move forward with this vision for the Vancouver's Reconciliation Bridge (location and time TBA)

A tale of two elevations

The High Line (also known as the High Line Park) is a 1.45-mile-long (2.33 km) aerial park in Manhattan built on an elevated section of an old New York Central Railroad viaduct called the West Side Line. You can see how the city's problem was transformed into an open space benefiting residents as well as the tourist industry. Millions of visitors have walked the High Line since it opened in 2009.

Visit www.thehighline.org for a visual tour and imagine am aerial garden walking park called Reconciliation Bridge in Vancouver, an initiative that would upgrade our city, protect the views of existing residents and create a concrete example of our commitment to keeping our promises to our First Nations people. Our Walk for Reconciliation in 2013 drew 70,000 people to walk in the rain across our old Georgia Viaduct inspiring this new viaduct vision called the Reconciliation Bridge.

The benefits of nutritional supplements

image © Drpixel

by Annette Dickinson

Nutrient shortfalls have health consequences that could impact daily life and overall wellbeing. National nutrition surveys show shortfalls in intakes of many nutrients. About one-third of American adults fail to get their average daily requirement for vitamin C even though vitamin C is relatively easy to obtain from foods; low intakes can lead to poor energy levels and weakness. More than 90 percent of adults fail to get their average daily requirement of vitamin E and many fall short in other vitamins and minerals, which can impact immune function. More than two-thirds of women of childbearing age have low intakes of iron, which can impair cognitive function, physical capability and endurance.

Even the most conscientious consumers find it difficult to get all the nutrients they need from food alone. While dietary improvement is a desirable goal, changing dietary patterns is extremely difficult. On the assumption that it is better for people to obtain recommended amounts of vitamins and minerals than to limp along with low intakes, a multivitamin with minerals which can be purchased for less than a dime a day is an inexpensive and effective way to fill a number of known nutrient gaps…

Dietary supplements are used by the majority of adults in the United States. More women than men use them; use also increases with age and education. Health professionals are just as likely as members of the general public to use supplements regularly. Supplement use should be seen as one component of the search for a healthier lifestyle, including improvements in overall food habits and engaging in physical exercise. While much of the current research on nutrition and health focuses on the prevention of chronic disease, the primary reason most people use multivitamins and other nutritional supplements is to support overall wellness.

A generous intake of calcium plus vitamin D demonstrably helps build optimum bone mass during childhood and adolescence and also slows the rate of bone loss that naturally occurs with aging. National surveys show that US calcium and vitamin D intakes are below recommended levels, especially for women – despite the fact that substantial research has shown supplements of calcium and vitamin D to be effective in maintaining or increasing bone density and potentially in protecting health in other ways as well.

Nutritional supplements are similarly helpful in addressing a woman's increased nutrient needs during pregnancy. Prenatal multivitamins with minerals are commonly prescribed to ensure that both the baby's and the mother's needs are met. In addition to meeting normal nutritional needs during pregnancy, a multivitamin can also play a critical role in protecting against some birth defects. An abundance of data shows that women who get 400 mcg of supplemental folic acid per day for one to three months prior to conception and one to three months after conception can substantially lower the risk of having a baby with a neural tube defect such as spina bifida. In most studies demonstrating these results, the protective amount of folic acid was consumed in the form of a multivitamin supplement.

While adequate nutrient intake is critical for all age groups, it may have particular significance for the elderly. Antioxidant supplements have been shown to have a positive impact on eye health and cognitive function. Adequate nutritional status also affects the condition of the skin and supports lung and muscle function. Calcium and vitamin D supplements, as previously noted, can have a powerful impact on bone health, and the Surgeon General says it is never too late to benefit from improved intakes of these nutrients. Vitamin D may also reduce the incidence of falls in older people. Vitamin and mineral supplements have been shown in some studies to improve immune function in the elderly. Low zinc intakes are associated with an increased risk of infections, including pneumonia. Supplemental intakes of vitamin E have had a positive effect in decreasing upper respiratory infections in some studies. For these reasons, it makes sense to encourage the elderly to use multivitamin and mineral supplements. Some experts have also advocated providing a basic multivitamin and mineral supplement to the elderly in nursing homes, as a matter of policy, to avoid risking the consequences of inadequate intakes.

Even the most conscientious consumers find it difficult to get all the nutrients they need from food alone.

Traditional models of health and nutrition were focused on dietary improvement and nutritional adequacy. Good dietary patterns and adequate nutrient intakes based on the Recommended Dietary Allowances were considered the best guides to health, but chronic disease prevention through dietary modification was not a common topic of discussion. This focus changed dramatically in the 1980s following the publication of numerous reports suggesting a direct relationship between dietary factors and the incidence of numerous "killer diseases."

The reports asserted that improved dietary patterns, including increased intakes of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, could reduce the risk of chronic disease. They also discussed which components of these foods were likely to be most protective, including fibre and a number of antioxidant nutrients. The reports emphasized the importance of improved food habits and downplayed the importance of increasing the intake of specific nutrients, but at the same time numerous clinical trials were undertaken specifically to evaluate the possibility that supplementation with some of the individual nutrients (especially antioxidants) might reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease.

While countless epidemiological trials support the hypothesis that dietary improvement can reduce the risk of chronic disease, the design of clinical trials to test that hypothesis is a challenge. Nevertheless, many clinical trials have in fact demonstrated benefits against disease for specific nutrients – for example, calcium to protect against osteoporosis, folic acid to help prevent some birth defects, and omega-3 fatty acids to reduce the risk of heart disease.

Excerpted from **The Benefits of Nutritional Supplements** (Fourth Edition) compiled by Annette Dickinson, Ph.D. Annette Dickinson worked in Washington, DC, for over 30 years for the Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN). She is currently a consultant to CRN and other clients on nutrition issues and dietary supplement regulation and is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition at the University of Minnesota.

What do essential nutrients actually do?

The functions of vitamins and essential minerals are well known and each of them plays one or more key roles in maintaining the daily functions basic to health and life itself. These functions are accomplished in every cell and every organ of the body, every minute of every day, from birth to death.

Some of these functions may ultimately provide some protection against chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease. However, it is their more mundane but vital roles in metabolism that cause vitamins and minerals to be defined as "essential nutrients." The following is intended as a simplified reminder of the immense scope of these basic functions.

photo © Andres Rodriguez

Vitamins and essential minerals are components of enzymes and cofactors the body needs to accomplish the everyday miracles of constantly keeping the heart beating, the blood flowing, the muscles flexing, the bones strong, the digestive system churning efficiently, the cells dividing, the eyes sparkling, the skin protecting our outer and inner surfaces, countless membranes controlling what goes into and out of every cell and tissue, the kidneys filtering the blood and adjusting blood pressure, the lungs drawing in life-giving oxygen and expelling other gases, the nerves snapping and the brain cogitating.

The collective magnitude of these activities is illustrated by the fact that a large fraction of the body's total energy expenditure is devoted to maintaining these functions. This portion of the total daily energy requirement is known as the basal metabolic rate (BMR), and it accounts for 50 to 70 percent of the body's total daily energy expenditure.

The essential nutrients are critical to the performance of these functions. An essential nutrient is a substance the body must have in order to function, but which it cannot make for itself. Therefore, the nutrient must be obtained from outside sources, namely foods. There are 13 vitamins (which by definition are essential), 15 essential minerals or electrolytes, nine essential amino acids and a couple of essential fatty acids.

Given an adequate supply of calories (from a mixture of fats, carbohydrates and protein) and plenty of water, the body can use these essential nutrients to mix and match the various other components of foods and turn them into its own personal energy supply as well as continually creating new cells and tissues, blood and bone, muscles and brain, skin and hair. The essential nutrients in many cases are the catalysts or cofactors that make these operations possible.

The cells in the adult body are not the ones we were born with, since all of the body cells and tissues are constantly turning over – being worn out and repaired or replaced with new ones. Some tissues, like the cells lining the intestinal tract, turn over very rapidly – about every three days. The red blood cells turn over about every 120 days and newly manufactured ones continually take the place of the old ones. Some other body cells and tissues may last for years, but even those are subject to constant repair.

Needless to say, any fault or faltering in these processes could have a direct impact on the body's ability to function. The nature of the impact will depend on which nutrients are in short supply and what tissues are affected.

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Nine cheeky book ideas for the New Year

Looking forward to a fresh new year of reporting from the underbelly of health and drugs, many ideas rush to mind. Surely another book is in the works? To start the year out right, here's nine new, tongue-in-cheek ideas for books on health and pharmaceutical subjects that I think need a full airing. Let me ask you this: which book would you like to see on a bookshelf near you?

Hate Mail From Hypochondriacs

Most of my readers are polite, respectful and praising, yet my collection of nasty-grams I have received over the years are from those who say I'm a little too hard on medicine, doctors, drug companies and general medical profiteers. Mail from people who take the time to write is particularly exhilarating as it shows great depth of commitment to causes and theories of healthcare, however misguided those causes or theories might be. Folks from the diabetes world, for example, will say I'm a little too quick to criticize the overly aggressive pushing of insulin on Type 2 diabetics, the prescribing of newer diabetes drugs (among the most useless prescription drugs on the planet) and the gross medicalization of blood sugars. Frankly, I think a major exposure is in order of the drug addled vampires pushing modern bloodletting, scaring millions of newly classified Type 2 diabetics and guilting them into drawing and testing blood several times a day. Note to file: there is no such contest as "He who dies with the lowest blood sugar wins!"

Rebel Patient: Informed Dissent and the Way to a Healthier You

At the risk of getting even more hate mail for preaching medical disobedience, I'm calling for more polite rebellion from patients. We are consistently told that ignoring your doctor's advice is bad for your health, damages the "doctor-patient relationship" and could even result in your getting fired by your doctor, yet there's an important distinction on when civil disobedience is warranted. If you have symptoms, a lump or something unusual that needs to be checked out, your doctor's advice deserves close attention. But if you are otherwise healthy and visit the doctor and are bombarded with requests for tests, lab work or prescriptions you don't understand, the healthiest response should be mild protest. The poking and prodding of the already healthy is medically intrusive and causes worry. It demands that you understand all the possible things that could go wrong because, in the words of my new motto, "Just because it's healthcare doesn't mean it's good for you." Politeness goes a long way and so too does appropriate rebellion.

Statistical Delusions and the Toxic Mix of Medicine and Math

Worried about being at risk for a heart attack or stroke? Then you need a bit of math. You can consult a cardiovascular risk calculator (many are free on the internet) and determine what your overall 10-year heart attack or stroke risk might be. Go ahead, play with the numbers; alter your blood glucose, your blood pressure, weight or cholesterol and you will learn how mostly trivial it all is. Most people – and here I include specialists like cardiologists – are seriously deluded on the "risk reduction" numbers related to altering these risk factors. It doesn't help that the numbers are almost always displayed in positive, glowing (and misleading) terms. Of the 100 people like you who take high blood pressure drugs for "high" blood pressure, the best case scenario is that maybe three people would be saved from having a heart attack in the next 10 years, but here's the kicker: 97 of the 100 people who swallow a lot of drugs and spend a lot of money because they are scared about their blood pres-

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sure and worried it could kill them are unlikely to benefit at all. Statistical delusions are wasteful and expensive. My book will show they are avoidable, too.

The De-Prescribing Revolution: Getting Better by Cutting Back

There are many actions people can take to ensure they won't suffer the ill effects of too much medicine. Particularly for older people, the most important thing is fewer drugs. Surely we trust that the doctors, specialists and other healthcare professionals looking after us are all doing things in our best interests, but there is one thing they are probably not doing: talking to each other. The end result is your elderly mom is stuck taking 23 medications and everyone in the family wonders why she feels like crap. We are already seeing the "De-prescribing Revolution" being fuelled by patients who ask hard questions about medication overload and the doctors who are ending this craziness. Asking, "Do I really need to be on all these drugs?" will give you the power to start the revolution.

Welcome to the world of PreDiabetes, PreHypertension, PreOsteoporosis and PreCancer, the four Horsemen of Hyperdiagnosis threatening to enslave the world in the spectre of Pre-Death. For profit, no doubt.

The Flu Fiasco: What Isn't Controversial About the Annual Flu Shot?

"Do it for yourself. Do it for the ones you love!" proclaim the exhortations every year when autumn rolls around and patients are told to roll up their sleeves for a flu shot. What we never learn is who is driving all the medical activity, the sheer hype and the millions in public health money to sell a vaccine to perfectly healthy people for a so-called disease that most people, if they get it, live through quite fine. The flu shot is a vaccine statistically unlikely to help the vast majority of people who take it. It exposes people to small, but potentially serious, risks and may actually *increase* your risk of developing the flu in future years. This whole embarrassing fiasco of professional recommendations and public health pronouncements are born from government/industry "partnerships" bent on protecting reputations and profits regardless of how colossally stupid they are.

Flipper Babies of the 21st Century – Relearning Lessons of Drugs in Pregnancy

The fact that prescription drug use in pregnant women continues to be promoted, encouraged and supported – even as the spectre of malformed thalidomide children haunts the human consciousness – needs a major smackdown. This book catalogues the often irrational way pregnant women are prescribed antidepressants, vaccines and a range of other prescription drugs against mounting evidence that we are at risk of having even more children who will suffer lifelong injuries and ill health due to that prescribing.

Dr. Dupe: How to Fool Even the Cleverest of Doctors

Even among the many doctors who adamantly refuse to become part of pharma's marketing plan, you can find evidence of the corrosive effects of pharma spin. In a medical culture where many doctors accept visits from drug reps, eat pharma lunches and attend "educational" activities planned and hosted by pharma, this near-daily diet of misinformation is perfectly legal and thoroughly corrupting. Rarely, however, will you find anyone on this diet that considers themselves duped. Documenting the many tricks, both subtle and obvious, used by practitioners wielding the greatest influence on the planet, I will write a book that will make you want to join the throngs of us demanding the great cleansing of medicine.

Fat Shaming, Guilt Tripping and Other Moral Disgraces From the World of Workplace Wellness

This book is about an array of increasingly troubling techniques used mostly in the US – but increasingly in Canada – trying to engender a higher level of "wellness" through workplace programs. Across a spectrum of programs, *continued p.11…*

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Shaping up in 2016!

At this time of year, it can be invigorating to renew our diet and fitness practices. This might involve shedding a few pounds, eating more veggies, gaining muscle strength and posting regular dates for exercise on the calendar.

One goal might be to get in shape. Belly fat or visceral fat (meaning fat in and around body organs) is far more dangerous to health than subcutaneous fat (the fat you can grab). Belly fat doesn't simply sit there; it actively releases hormones and inflammatory chemicals that can increase insulin resistance, blood cholesterol, blood pressure and the tendency for blood to clot. Visceral fat releases free fatty acids that travel to the liver and increase the production of "bad" LDL cholesterol and triglycerides. The best way to get rid of belly fat is to cut calories – especially from refined carbohydrates, such as sugar and white flour products and unhealthy types of fat – and to increase exercise.

Refined carbohydrates, especially sugars, are primary drivers of belly fat. When high carbohydrate foods are refined or processed into sugars and starches, they lose roughly 80 percent of their fibre, vitamins and minerals and about 95 percent of their phytochemicals. In populations consuming excess calories, the damaging effects of refined carbohydrates are even more pronounced. Liquid sugar is the worst culprit, as the calories from liquids do not register with the appetite control centre the way solid calories do so total calorie intakes increase. Fructose is even more concerning than glucose because high levels of intake quickly exceed our body's capacity to handle it and it is quickly converted to fat. Fructose in fruit is provided in smaller amounts that the body is better able to manage.

The best way to get rid of belly fat is to cut calories and to increase exercise.

Last year, the media had a field day after research was released suggesting there was no association between saturated fat and heart disease. Headlines swiftly vindicated beef, bacon, butter and brie. As it turns out, the results were oversimplified and misinterpreted. Expert panels were convened and the verdict is crystal clear: "Saturated fats are not off the hook." Strong evidence from clinical trials show saturated fat increases LDL-cholesterol and has a negative impact on cardiometabolic risk. The most recent recommendations from the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association recommend a dietary pattern that achieves 5-6 percent of calories from saturated fat for the management of heart disease.

Noted below are some of the most health-oriented steps you can take. Just enjoy whatever level you can achieve and keep your focus on a goal.

- Replace refined carbohydrates (sugar and white flour products) with unrefined carbohydrates (from legumes, whole grains, vegetables and fruits).
- Reduce the saturated fat in your diet. Rely mainly on whole foods such as nuts, seeds and avocados for fat.
- Engage in physical activity at least six days a week. Choose a mix on different days that improves your strength, aerobic capacity, endurance, flexibility and balance.
- Build a support network that helps you stay on track with health, good nutrition and fitness. It is important to become part of a supportive community.

After living in Langley for the past two decades, BC dietitian **Vesanto Melina** is thrilled to be returning to Vancouver to live at the new cohousing community on 33rd Ave. (vancouvercohousing.com) www.becomingvegan.ca, vesanto.melina@gmail.com

photo © Iakov Filimonov

by Sustainable Pulse.com

GMO BITES

Russia bans GMO products

Russian President Vladimir Putin has told the Russian Parliament that Russia should become the world's largest supplier of organic foods, in a message released to the media on Thursday.

"Not only can we ourselves eat it, but also taking into account our land and water – which is particularly important – resources Russia could become the world's largest supplier of healthy, environmentally friendly, high-quality food that has long been missing in some western producers," Putin stated.

"Especially as the demand on the global market for such products is growing," he continued.

As Putin said, it is necessary to have a nationwide approach on the issue and also by 2020 to fully meet the Russian demand for locally produced Russian food.

2015 has been a year of change in Russian agriculture with the Russian government announcing a whole new approach to food production and labeling.

In January 2015 Putin signed the Russian Federation Code of Administrative Offences into law, including a new article establishing liability for the violation of mandatory requirements for the labeling of food products that contain GMOs.

The bill which was submitted by the Federal Service for Supervision of Consumer Protection and Welfare (Rospotrebnadzor) imposes fines for vague or unclear labeling on food products containing genetically modified ingredients.

In June, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich has announced that Russia will not use genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to increase productivity in agriculture, while he was speaking on Friday at a session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

"Russia has chosen a different path. We will not use these technologies", he said.

As a result of this decision Russian products will be "one of the cleanest in the world" in terms of technology use, Dvorkovich continued. A bill for a full ban on the cultivation of GM crops is currently going through the State Duma.

Russian Minister of Agriculture Nikolai Fyodorov also believes that Russia must remain a GMO-free country. At a meeting of deputies representing rural areas organized by United Russia, he said that the government will not "poison their citizens."

...*Cassels* from p.9

ranging from the merely inconvenient to massive bullying on a corporate scale, learn the many ways of influencing peoples' health behaviour – a massively immoral exercise likely to be counterproductive.

The Four Horsemen of Hyperdiagnosis

While having a risk factor for a disease is not a disease in and of itself, we can surely make it look like one. Welcome to the world of PreDiabetes, PreHypertension, PreOsteoporosis and PreCancer, the four Horsemen of Hyperdiagnosis, threatening to enslave the world in the spectre of Pre-Death. For profit, no doubt.

Do you want to vote? Go to www.alancassels.com and vote for your favourite choice!

Alan Cassels is a drug policy researcher and author in Victoria. His latest book, **The Cochrane Collaboration: Medicine's Best Kept Secret** is now available. Follow him on twitter @AKECassels

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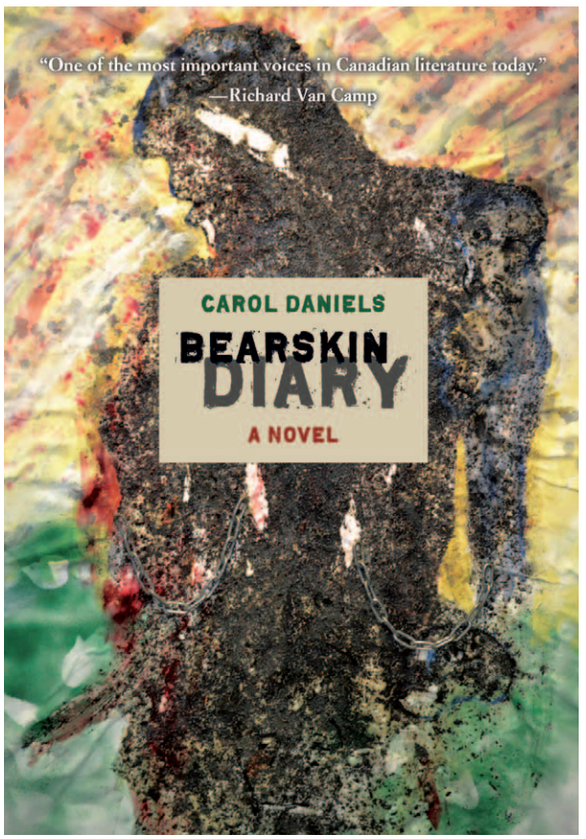
Surviving Canada's shameful '60s Scoop



The author's cover artwork is a 5X4 foot painting of an Elder's story – running to hide from Indian Agents – made from dirt, acrylics and other materials.

The wise Cherokee proverb, "Never criticize a person until you've walked a mile in their moccasins," encapsulates the idea that it's impossible to internalize another person's point of view without climbing into their skin and walking around in their world. Too often, non-Aboriginals lack even the basic knowledge of the lives of indigenous people.

For example, how many of us could comprehend why a four-year-old child would attempt to scrub colour from their skin, scouring and bleeding profusely? Carol Daniels' just-published first novel, *Bearskin Diary* (Nightwood), offers much insight and I winced at the unprecedented glimpses into the raw, painful reality of Canada's First Nations.

Daniels was the first aboriginal anchor in national news – *CBC Newsworld* (1989). In her 30-year, far-flung, cross-country journalism career, she studied law at the University of New Brunswick, became the first female Aboriginal Lay Bencher in Manitoba and ran provincially in Saskatchewan (NDP, 2011), unsuccessfully. Now, an award-winning multidisciplinary artist, actress and member of the Cree Nation, she was a victim of the little known "60's Scoop," when 20,000 plus Canadian babies were torn from their mother's arms, up into the 1980s.

Fostered and adopted, the only native in a white community, Daniels, like many "Scoop Kids" tried to erase her colour. I called her Regina home the day after the new federal government announced an inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

"I'm so happy, for myself and the families that may find some peace. I could have been among the victims. Now we might finally learn what happened and why it is happening. As well, as an unwed aboriginal woman, I would have been destroyed to leave a hospital without my three children.

"This is an exciting time in Canada, as First Nations, Metis and Inuit gain traction on what I call the 'Red Road.' The Truth and Reconciliation report is finished, with some recommendations being implemented. And we have an historic number of Aboriginal MP's, including Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould.

"Many Canadians don't know about the Scoop, nobody spoke about it. Kids who went through it constantly felt alienated, isolated, ostracized, asking, "Where do I go?' Nobody listened or understood. We were just numbers, thousands of little brown babies, like stray dogs. They wanted to get us early, to assimilate us faster, rather than wait a few years as with residential school victims. Took us away, sometimes as slave labour, or didn't have anything to do with us – didn't know where to put us. I hope to add to new dialogue and to tell victims they aren't alone; there is hope and help.

Carol Daniels

"Some things in *Bearskin Diary,* people won't like: sexuality and really ugly behaviour, dark, in-your-face scenes. It's a frank look at racism, at what First Nations have to go through. I wanted to put it out there and don't care if it's not polite."

In her experience, most media aren't up to reporting Aboriginal issues.

"They don't know a damn thing about us. Where's the perspective if you have no idea what's going on, or what has gone on? I've heard it all in story meetings and press bars. 'Who gives a shit what an Indian thinks.' 'No one wants to see one on TV' and 'You work here, but will never be one of us.' There's a handful of reporters from our fastest rising demographic. Being representative of the population is good business for God-sake and the CBC has been a godsend, a necessity, not a utility, a last bastion."

Bearskin Diary tells the story of Sandy – named for soil – scooped, then adopted by a Ukrainian family. She struggles with relentless bullying and racism from schoolmates, strangers, co-workers and her own lack of understanding of her heritage. Daniels had enough journalism and opted for fiction. But she writes what she knows, reflecting her own experience, stories and characters, culled from assignments, in crisp, conversational news style. There are heart-breaking moments, including childhood mimicking of *National Geographic* magazine, the only window to a non-white world. Heart pounding, dangerous investigative reporting of the secret Saskatoon police "Starlight Tours" is eerily similar to police officers in Val D'or, Quebec, and elsewhere, questioned for driving Indigenous women to city outskirts, sexually assaulting them then leaving them to walk to safety.

Bearskin Diary is reaching an audience beyond what anyone imagined.

Daniels notes, "It started as a play while I was working in Yellowknife, after a close friend's death in 2009 before he got to his wish list. It grew in the long, cold nights over eight years. I got so many rejection letters; I couldn't even talk when I was told it would be published. It's been translated into 10 languages, released worldwide.

"In my lifetime, the Pass System – modelled after South Africa's Apartheid – has ended. We can leave a reservation without permission. And we are voting, in large numbers, something we never did – or were allowed to do – before. I ran for office as encouragement. Vote out those who hate us then we won't have to protest as much, after the fact. Just get them out. Support people committed to moving forward with real change.

"Our culture is important to everyone. We all want the same thing for our kids, strong communities and opportunities, healthy food, basic education. Indigenous people are beautiful, strong and knowledgeable, just the way they are, friends and neighbours. Give us the tools to break stereotypes. Maybe, a simplistic start, but a good one, nevertheless.

"We need talk more – get to know each other, share food and conversation. In certain situations, I walk in and immediately identify racism. It's like an energy you can feel. Then I start doing my thing and we come together in song and joy. It all boils down to love and understanding."

Daniels (nee Morin) gives new voice to silenced First Nations women, truth to power and an essential, integral perspective that will resonate with all walks. Her birth mother is deceased, but she reunited with her biological family. All ties were cut with her adoptive family in 2012, when she married Lyle Daniels in a traditional ceremony. After attending her first pow-wow and picking up a drum and the Cree language, she asked, "Why haven't I been doing this all of my life?"

Resilient or overwhelmed?

Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts. – Winston Churchill

Sometimes, our lives can feel completely overwhelming, especially if things are going wrong. Actually, it is not life that is overwhelming, but rather our emotional response to what is happening. Even at that, it may be our fear of what *might* happen that causes us to feel most overwhelmed.

An example might be fear of a job layoff. If we think we will never get another job and we will lose our house, of course we will scare ourselves. If a relationship is ending and we think we will never find another partner and spend the rest of our lives alone and lonely, we will feel hopeless.

If we have an ache or pain and convince ourselves we have cancer and are going to die and then think of all the future events we will miss – all this before even going to the doctor – of course we will be overwhelmed.

It is the worst-case scenarios we imagine that can keep us up at night. It is like the book *Chicken Little,* where an acorn falls on the chicken's head and she panics because she believes the sky is falling. She gets everyone around her all worked up too and convinces them the end is near.

We get attached to things staying as they are, but we live in a world where change is the only constant.

There is a better way, a way we can keep ourselves from diving into worry and panic. The first thing is to ask ourselves if the thing we are worrying about has actually happened. Have I actually been laid off? Have I been diagnosed with a disease? If not, then right now I am okay.

The next thing is to ask if the outcome we fear is guaranteed to happen. Is it guaranteed I will never find another job or never meet a new partner or, if I have cancer, that I will die? Statements that start with "what if?" are simply imaginings. We are creating a daytime nightmare for ourselves. It is really our inner child who is overwhelmed. That is the part of us that feels vulnerable and not in control. The inner child feels only fear and does not know what to do.

If we put our wise adult in charge, we can bring more rationality to the situation, problem solve and develop strategies. If I do get laid off, what will I do? I can update my resume. I can start seeing what is out there and let everyone know I am available. If there is nothing in my field, what else can I do to generate income until the economy improves? Perhaps I can talk to the bank and reduce my mortgage payments.

We can also learn to support and comfort ourselves. Most of the things we fear never happen. Life is about developing resistance, overcoming challenges and adapting to change. Yes, we can feel sad or disappointed by what comes our way, but if we dwell on that, we will become stuck.

In the Buddhist philosophy, it is said all human suffering comes from attachment and an inability to accept change. We get attached to things staying as they are, but we live in a world where change is the only constant.

Change can be hard; we may feel hurt and yes, even scared. No matter what happens, we create our reality. We can either feel sorry for ourselves and stay in a dark, glum place or we can rally our strength and be determined to find ways to enjoy our lives.

It is still, after all, a beautiful world and our life is what we make it.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, "Deep Powerful Change" hypnosis CDs and "Creating Effective Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca

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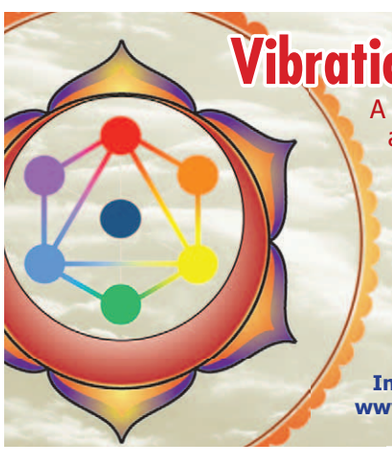

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Peak fitness

Get fit with less exercise time

by Dr. Mercola

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Exercise is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. I, along with countless other health experts and scientific studies, attest to its many benefits. Performing it correctly will produce positive biochemical changes in your body and even help prevent certain chronic diseases. Yet committing to a regular exercise program is one of the biggest issues people face today, as many simply do not have the time to do it.

Fortunately, recent studies show that you can achieve your fitness goals by replacing hours-long cardio sessions with high-intensity interval training, which is done by combining short bursts of intense exercise with ample periods of rest.

After 30 years of long-distance running, I finally switched to high-intensity interval training or anaerobic training, which is a part of my total Peak Fitness program. In as little as 20 minutes, twice a week, Peak Fitness has helped me obtain numerous benefits – more than what conventional aerobic training can bring.

What's in it for you?

One significant benefit of high-intensity interval training is the increased production of human growth hormone (HGH), also known as the "fitness hormone." HGH is a synergistic, foundational, biochemical underpinning that promotes muscle and effectively burns excessive fat.

While Peak Fitness type exercises are more successful at fat burning and weight management, they can also benefit your heart and lower your risk for certain chronic diseases like diabetes. The reason is high-intensity interval workouts can help improve insulin sensitivity and glucose tolerance – two things that are crucial to optimal health.

Other benefits associated with interval training include:

- Reduced body fat
- Improved speed and athletic performance
- Improved muscle tone
- Younger-looking skin
- Increase in energy

The benefits of Peak Fitness are enhanced when combined with intermittent fasting, a scheduled eating plan. Working out in a fasted state can help your cells rebuild and repair and keeps them biologically young. This also improves your body's fat burning mechanism and helps your body shift from burning glucose to burning fat as fuel.

How this exercise program is performed

One of the many advantages of doing Peak Fitness exercises is that you don't need a gym to do it. This routine is done twice a week with any type of exercise. I personally do high-intensity exercise using a recumbent bike or an elliptical machine.

While sprinting outdoors is one option, you must be very careful to avoid injuries. Unless you are an athlete or have high fitness levels, I advise avoiding sprinting, as many get seriously injured. If you are keen on sprinting, make sure you allot time to stretch properly.

A Peak Fitness exercise usually looks like this

Warm up for three minutes.

Exercise as hard and fast as you can for 30 seconds. You should be gasping for breath and feel like you couldn't possibly go on another few seconds. It is better to use lower resistance and higher repetitions to increase your heart rate.

Recover for 90 seconds, still moving but at a slower pace and with decreased resistance.

Repeat the high-intensity exercise and recovery seven more times. When you're first starting out, depending on your level of fitness, you may only be able to do two or three repetitions of the high-intensity intervals. As you get fitter, just keep adding repetitions until you're doing eight during your 20-minute session.

Cool down for a few minutes afterwards by cutting down your intensity by 50 to 80 percent.

If you are not in shape, you will only want to start with a few reps and work your way up to the full eight reps. Also, you never want to do this more than three times a week as your body requires time to recover from this extensive stress if you are to recover properly and receive all its benefits.

You can achieve your fitness goals by replacing hours-long cardio sessions with high-intensity interval training, which is done by combining short bursts of intense exercise with ample periods of rest.

During this time, you'll want to raise your heart rate to your anaerobic threshold that can be attained by working out as intensely as possible for 20 to 30 seconds. To calculate your anaerobic threshold, subtract your age from 220. As mentioned before, all you need is 20 minutes or less to complete the entire workout.

Reach the peak of your fitness goals

So are you ready to take your workout to the next level, reaching your fitness goals in only a fraction of the time? Check out my infographic on this important development in the fitness world and learn more about my high-intensity fitness regimen. Also discover tips and other workouts that you can incorporate to your daily exercise program. [Visit www.mercola.com and search for What is Peak Fitness?]

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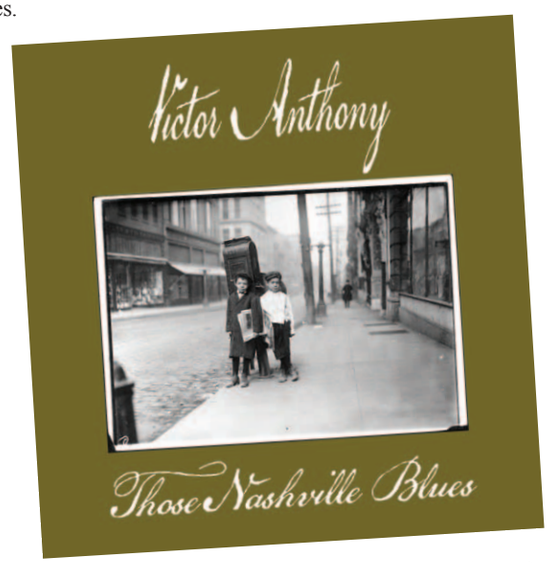
Victor Anthony salutes Canada

The world is awash in opinions on immigration – to say nothing of millions of tragically desperate refugees – and heated debate about citizenship, much of it spilling over from the "Excited States." One contribution most worthy of attention and repeat listening hails from the deep, musically iconic cradle and melting pot far south of the 48th parallel: Victor Anthony's new release, *Those Nashville Blues.*

Those Nashville Blues is a warm welcome, unadorned, authentic, timeless and although all pre-WWII, new and fresh to Canadian music fans.

On August 12, 2014, the judge who swore Victor in as a Canadian citizen, along with his wife Joelle, a prolific, published writer – and 91 other candidates – stressed their responsibility to share their native culture with new neighbours and fellow citizens originally from "somewhere else." Taking the judge at his word, Victor has compiled a collection of songs he learned first-hand from masters who "lived down the road." And make no mistake; when you search for evidence of "American exceptionalism," the blues are a gift for the ages.



Those Nashville Blues is a warm welcome, unadorned, authentic, timeless and although all pre-WWII, new and fresh to Canadian music fans. There's nothing flash or gaudy – no need for phoney enhancement or technological trickery. As Victor says, "Ragged but right… and I hope it falls easy on your ears."

If you're wondering "Victor who?" he recorded three albums under his birth surname Mecyssne in the 90's and was very favourably reviewed by the likes of *Rolling Stone* and *Sing Out!* magazines.

His band, Victor Mecyssne and the Ragtops, included what he describes as "high-falutin, big-cheese musicians, at the top of the food chain," such as Grammy winners bassist Jeff "Stick" Davis (Amazing Rhythm Aces, best known for the mega-hit, *Third Rate Romance*) and saxophonist Jeff Coffin (Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, Dave Matthews Band). For years, Victor also played myriad acting and production roles with the celebrated Cumberland County Players.

However, in his characteristic inimitable fashion, Victor fled the scene – taking his wife's surname "Anthony" – and headed North. He threw away his cigarettes and threw himself into the community of Gabriola Island.

"Joelle and I were suffering from a deficiency that's been dubbed 'Vitamin T' for 'Tribe'; we longed for community and found it here, including the unique Gabriola Commons and musicians to play with, including some on the album like Lloyd Artzen who has been playing New Orleans jazz for 70 years," he recalls.

"I was fearful of guns people were packin' and buying at places like Wal-Mart and had one stuck in my face. A large part of our decision was health care. An only child, I had to sell my house to pay for treatment for my mother, even though she retired on a government plan after heading up the office of a US Senator. There were too many problems that wouldn't be solved in my lifetime. And when George W. Bush was re-elected, fair and square, why, that broke the camel's back.

Victor Anthony photo by James Emler.

"We saw pictures in guide books for the Gulf Islands and the Big Island [Vancouver] and honeymooned here, searching locations, amazed at some things that Canadians take for granted: women comfortably walking the streets of Victoria late at night, something you don't see in many cities that size, RCMP who weren't armed to the teeth, polite, honest, friendly people who are part of the landscape that makes me proud and happy every day."

Victor's music is steeped in real life experience that money can't buy and nobody can fake. His deceased father was "head fret of a whole shooting match," president of a company, that, among other things, pressed records and distributed them, supplied jukeboxes far and wide with the latest '45s and was first in line with car stereos and independent labels like Bragg records. The young man's summer job comprised working, living and breathing music and the biz. Piano and sax lessons filled in time until the Beatles appeared on *Ed Sullivan* when, like almost everyone else, he took up guitar.

Right from the get-go, *Those Nashville Blues* is real and really eclectic, which resonates through all 12 tracks. As a college student, Victor found the address and favoured whisky of Furry Lewis and spent an afternoon sippin' and listenin' to blues played from a daybed – Furry's wooden leg propped in the corner – in the same room Mick and Keith visited to ask Furry to open for the Rolling Stones on tour. Victor revisits the source in his version of *Dry Land Blues*, the opening cut of a stellar collection.

"It took two years of hard work – to the day – to get into Canada," he reports. "And because we couldn't bear to reside in a place where we couldn't vote, another three years to become citizens. We're grateful."

Another piece has been added to Canada's multicultural mosaic, emanating from an appreciative, motivated, highly skilled and talented recent immigrant. Juno award-winning artists, Valdy, Gary Fjellgaard and David Gogo have all recently recorded some of Anthony's original compositions. Little wonder so many of us in this country are shouting "More!" For additional information, visit victoranthony.ca and while there don't miss his photography or the link to Joelle's work.

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of **Our Clinic**. brucemason@shaw.ca

Catching up

Congratulations to Kevin "Sipreano" Howes and Light in the Attic Records, nominated for a Grammy (Best Historical Album) for *Native North America (Vol. 1)*. Featured in *Common Ground* (January 2015).

Leon Bibb tribute: The following information was unavailable at press time last month: A celebration of Leon Bibb's life will be staged at the Arts Club's Granville Island Stage, 2pm, January 10, 2016. Doors open at 1:30pm.

Mac McLaughlin

StarWise

January 2016

IT MIGHT BE worth our while to take a deep look at the intrinsic meanings of Capricorn and its ruling planet Saturn. Deeply embedded religious beliefs and laws come under the heading of Saturn/Capricorn. Chronos (Father Time) carried a scythe and was known as the grim reaper, associated with death, poverty, pestilence and disease. Saturn seeks to correct, cleanse and purify. He rules magistrates and lawyers, along with fathers, husbands, bosses and others that seek to lead and rule. Saturn/Capricorn represents the structures we expect to remain the same, unchanged throughout time. Sounds like sour grapes and castor oil mixed into one.

The above commentary is a pretty general description of this dreary planetary energy. No wonder people from the east and west fear Saturn and dread the news of his arrival. He is a wet blanket and can certainly put a damper on our good spirits. No doubt, he has been behind the pain and suffering of every religious or political crusade that has ever manifested on our planet throughout all time. Pray my way or die. Comply, surrender, straighten out and fly right is the message of this heavy-handed, hooded messenger.

Probably got you depressed by now, but lets take another approach to what is behind this seemingly very harsh planetary deity. Saturn is very connected to nature, purity and wholesomeness. What Saturn has always tried to teach us is to live a life of purity and simplicity. The closer to nature we live, the healthier and happier we become. Likened to a loving father, he wants only the best for his children and will go to extreme means to keep them clean and safe. This Capricorn energy is on board and we will be imbibing of this energy for many years to come. Pluto visits Capricorn until November 2024 and this energy alone signals great changes on the planet. Saturn/Capricorn resists changes while Pluto is the planet of inevitable regeneration and transformation. By the spring of 2020, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and Pluto are in Capricorn and it might very well spell out a time in which we experience the greatest changes and challenges to our way of life. Uranus will be in Taurus at that time, another harbinger that nothing will remain the same and all is due to change. Mainly, we must do our part and tote our grain of sand to the common pile. "What to do?" you might ask? Simplify, purify, stay close to nature and give love to one and all.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.

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ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19
You are very good at promoting, instigating and pioneering ways to move into the future. You accomplish these objectives by staying true to yourself and striving to simplify and disentangle the complicated knots we have tied ourselves with. The next several years will bring myriad opportunities for you create something totally original and exciting.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21
The initial spark of genius that Aries ignites, Taurus sustains and solidifies. In the summer of 2018, Uranus will visit Taurus until 2026. These are the years of your greatest changes and challenges. Your genius may be showing in those years and it may be a highly prolific, creative, artistic and innovative time. Start now.

GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20
Death and taxes: two topics that most of us would rather skip over, ignore or hope would go away. But no way – they're on board and must be dealt with. The present planetary positions are indicating a time in which you might be looking at all kinds of deep topics, including mysticism and spirituality.

CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22
A great transformative energy is taking place. Life may be full of complexities, some hidden and some not. Power plays and powerful days unfold in which you get to see who is loyal or not. Births and deaths, wills and legacies, deep loves and profound memories are made. Be clean and let your works be seen.

LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22
Sparks could fly in the first week of January. It won't take much for you or others to lose their cool and it may be wise to follow the axiom, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Negotiations regarding business, romance and children come up throughout the month. Travel to exotic locations may be considered as well.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22
It's time to rethink the plan and do what Virgo does best, which is to analyze any particular thing down to its very core. While you're doing all this super brain work, keep in mind it's also time to consider just where you're at on the level of spirituality and your relationship to the creator.

LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22
January is a highly creative month for Libra. Not so much in the sense of output and production, but in how you shape your world. It might be time to weigh up your relationships and see which ones are worthy and worth continuing. It's time to go deep within the sanctum of your soul.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21
Lord Mars visits your sign until early March providing much needed energy, strength and confidence. You may feel as though you have had the stuffing kicked out of you over the last few years, but now you're on the mend and back to your old self again. Set your gaze on the target and move forward.

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21
Now's the time for some deep introspection regarding matters of the heart. Sagittarius holds the highest ideals and when they're not met it can cause a bit of depression. On the other hand, when you have your priorities right you can fly high like no other. Love and career considerations are the dominant topics.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19
Certain aspects of life are being revealed. Things you may never have considered are coming up and must be handled. Not half way, but all the way. As my beloved guru has taught us, "Don't waste the capital you have been given." Money, name and fame won't do it, but devotion to higher consciousness will.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19
The full Moon on January 23 and a few days either side of this date will help illuminate what must be done in order for you to feel you have yourself together, balanced and copacetic. Much is happening behind the scenes and soon enough what was hidden will come to light. Give love and forgiveness.

PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20
When the cup is full, it cannot receive. Yes, you may have it all and feel empty at the same time. The problem stems from not taking care of your spiritual life. A muscle not used will atrophy and so it is with our soul currents. They need daily exercise, care, devotion, meditation and love.

Paris a global shift for climate

When our children's children look back to what we did to keep our planet livable, they may see this year's United Nations climate conference in Paris as a turning point.

The 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) may have been our last chance for a meaningful agreement to shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy before ongoing damage to the world's climate becomes irreversible and devastating.

Nations that met in Paris are responsible for over 95 percent of global emissions. On December 12, following multiple rounds of long meetings, they revealed the final text of the Paris Agreement. Though far from perfect, it's a significant achievement. The Paris Agreement, in process and outcome, is… the first universal accord to spell out ways to confront climate change, with Canada and other industrialized nations required to transition from fossil fuels to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050 and developing nations by about 2080.

> The world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, China, was criticized for trying to water down requirements.

Before meeting in Paris, governments drafted plans to reduce national carbon emissions beginning in 2020. One COP21 negotiation goal – a review mechanism to encourage countries to improve targets over time – was achieved… Present commitments won't quite get us there, but the called-for improving of targets every five years will get us closer.

Canada's delegation had the added goal of rebuilding the country's reputation as an environmental leader. For years, we received countless "Fossil of the Day" awards for shortsightedness and stonewalling negotiations.

Responding to calls from citizens countrywide, our delegation returned to a more co-operative approach, advocating for inclusion of human rights and indigenous knowledge, along with recognition of the critical importance of the 1.5 C goal. Canada still received two "Fossil" awards for lacking emissions-goals ambition and limiting availability of funds for "loss and damage," but compared to some nations, our country was a positive force.

The world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, China, was criticized for trying to water down requirements for a common emissions-and-targets reporting system and opposing a process to require countries to update emissions-reductions goals every five years, advocating instead for voluntary updates.

Compromises produced a final product that falls short of assigning liability for past emissions and providing dependable "loss and damage" payments to nations already suffering from the effects of climate change. Ongoing pressure is also needed to ensure targets are met and become more ambitious over time. Despite these shortcomings, the Paris Agreement is a leap forward in the fight against climate change.

The first step in realizing stronger goals for Canada begins now. Our government promised more ambitious targets and a framework for cutting carbon pollution and expanding renewable energy within 90 days of the conference, by March 11, 2016.

The global community has taken a big step to get human civilization back on track. It's up to us to ensure that the planet we want – with clean air, safe water, fertile soil and a stable climate – stays within reach, for our sake and the sake of our descendants.

Excerpted from the original article. **David Suzuk**i is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Climate and Clean Energy Communications and research specialist Steve Kux. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

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She graduate from Anhui College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 1985. She has been working in the field of TCM since then. Please call to book your appointment.

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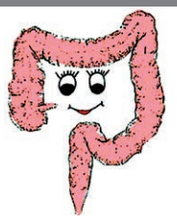

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– Fred Rogers

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INDEPENDENT MEDIA David Christopher

MEDIA

Five challenges for digital rights in 2016

What a year 2015 has been! In the space of just 12 months, with the support of our amazing community and partners around the globe, OpenMedia fought to ensure people everywhere have affordable access to an Internet that is surveillance and censorship-free.

Highlights include winning a historic fight at the U.S. FCC for Net Neutrality, pushing back hard against an EU plan to copyright "snippets" and helping rally hundreds of thousands against C-51, Canada's reckless surveillance bill.

Looking ahead, one thing is clear: challenges to our digital rights are set to intensify. Out-of-touch government bureaucracies and unaccountable conglomerates threaten to further undermine the free and open Internet we love.

Here are five big challenges we will face in 2016:

1. The final text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership revealed a serious threat to Internet freedom. It will force participating nations to import draconian US-style copyright rules, while also undermining data privacy, robbing the public domain and inducing Internet providers to censor websites. With TPP members due to sign the deal on February 4, we'll need to ramp up the public pressure against what amounts to an Internet censorship plan. Speak out at StopTheSecrecy.net

2. In Canada, the unpopular Bill C-51 proved to be one of the most controversial issues in the recent federal election. With over 300,000 speaking up against it, pressure is intensifying on the new Liberal government to repeal the bill. That's why we're asking Prime Minister Trudeau to sit down with OpenMedia, privacy experts and civic society representatives to discuss how best to address this. Join this call at KillC51.ca

3. The European Commission's recently released copyright framework threatens to place "snippets" – the brief explanatory extracts that often accompany a hyperlink – under copyright, a proposal that would severely restrict our ability to access and share information online. The Commission will introduce legislation within the next six months and we'll need to ensure Internet users' voices get heard, especially at the European Parliament, which will need to approve any legislation. Learn more at SaveTheLink.org

4. The future of affordability and choice in Canada's Internet sector is on the line. Telecom giant Bell is trying to overturn hard-won customer choice rules that will ensure Canadians can obtain ultra-fast fibre Internet from indie ISPs. As soon as we heard about Bell's plan, the OpenMedia community swung into action to tell the new government to reject Bell's price-gouging scheme. We've just submitted a hard-hitting, in-depth policy brief to the federal government, but we'll need to keep up the pressure to ensure they listen. Add your voice Act.OpenMedia.org/Emergency

5. 2015 will perhaps best be remembered as the year pro-Internet advocates secured strong Net Neutrality rules at the FCC that prohibited attempts by telecom conglomerates to consign some of our favourite websites to an Internet slow lane. Sadly, telecom giants haven't let up in their attempts to overturn these important customer protections. They've gone to court and are even trying to strong-arm Congress into undermining the rules. We'll need to stay vigilant to ensure the new rules are safeguarded. Learn more at StopTheSlowdown.net

Yup, it's going to be a busy year! Keep in touch with all the latest at OpenMedia.org

David Christopher is the communications manager for OpenMedia, a community-based organization that safeguards the possibilities of the open Internet.

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Events

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JAN 3, 16, 31
Krishnamurti Vancouver Group @ Vancouver Public Library, Board Breakout Room, 350 W. Georgia St. 1-5PM. Free video showing & dialogue! www.meetup.com/Krishnamurti-Vancouver-Group

JAN 10
"Free the Voice" workshop with Lynn McGown, singer, teacher, vocal coach. 11AM-5PM. $130. For more info and to reserve your space, call 604-222-4113. Visit www.lynnmcgown.com

JAN 10
Leon Bibb Tribute: A Celebration of Life – Arts Club's Granville Island Stage, 2PM. Doors open 1:30PM. 604-687-1644, www.artsclub.com

JAN 15
Free talk by Sonya Lea author of Wondering Who You Are. At Banyen Books, 3608 W. 4th Ave, Vancouver, 6:30-8PM. www.wonderingwhoyouare.com

JAN 15-17
Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM $10; Course $395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 www.pacificreflexology.com

JAN 17
Meditation for Spiritual Awareness: FREE Intro Workshop by Science of Spirituality on the Theory & Practice of JYOTI Meditation – Meditation on the Inner Light. 2PM at the Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Rd., Richmond. For info & to register: Linda, 604-985-5840. Drop-ins welcome.

JAN 23-24
Victoria Health Show: Discover the latest products, trends, health news and tips. Pearkes Recreation Centre. Sat: 10AM-6PM, Sun: 11-5PM. Tickets $8, Seniors $6, Students $6. Cash admission at door. healthshows.com

JAN 24
Sing Your Heart Out with Lynn McGown, singer, teacher, vocal coach. 1:30-4PM. $50. For more info and to reserve your space, call 604-222-4113. Visit www.lynnmcgown.com

JAN 28-29
Seeds: A compelling theatre production about the legal battle between Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser and biotech company Monsanto. With Eric Peterson (Corner Gas). Main Stage at the Surrey Arts Centre, 8PM. Tickets from $25 at tickets.surrey.ca, 604-501-5566.

JAN 29-30
Banyen Presents Gabor Mate at Sai Baba Community Centre. Tickets & info at banyen.com Visit drgabormate.com

JAN 29-31
Advanced Reflexology: Professional Skills Certificate Course: $395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 www.pacificreflexology.com

JAN 31 & FEB 7
Vibrational Sound & Color lecture & workshop presented by spiritual teacher Raphael De Mohan. Jan 31: "Existential Pure Being" lecture, 1-3PM, Surrey. Feb 7: "Power of the Voice" workshop, 10-5PM, Surrey. Info/registration, call 778-545-0800. www.vibrationsoundcolor.com

FEB 3
Love out Loud with Satu Springer and Sarah Brooks. 7:30PM sharp. Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak @41st. www.clearmind.com Bring display ad this page for free entry.

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FEB 12-14
The Wellness Show: Helping You Find Balance – Exhibits, seminars, cooking, demos, prizes & more. Vancouver Convention Centre, East Building, Exhibit hall B&C. Event info: www.thewellnessshow.com or 604-983-2794.

FEB 20 & 21
T & T Spiritual and Wellness Connections Presents a two-day Psychic & Wellness Event. Best Western, 319 North Road, Coquitlam. For more info: www.fair.tandtvancouver.com

APR 23-24
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Women's Expos: Victoria Spring Expo, www.victoriawomensshow.com and
Pet Expo: Victoria www.vancouverislandpetexpo.com
Baby & Family Fair: Vancouver http://baby-fair.com

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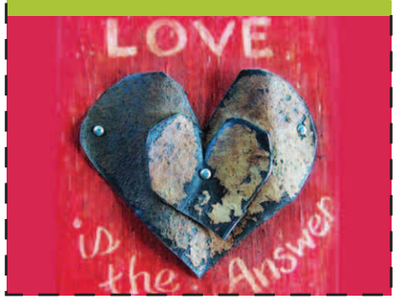

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